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ABSTRACT

A study considered the beliefs and practices of three preservice content area teachers about the required content area reading course and its relationship to their field experiences. The three preservice teachers, all older, nontraditional students with previous career experiences, averaged eight dialogue journal entries during their observation-participation field experiences two days per week for two hours per day at a Hawaiian suburban intermediate school. Retrospective interviews were conducted two years after the completion of the field experience. Three major categories emerged from analysis of the journal entries: value of content area reading; preservice teacher thoughts, feelings, and fears; and relationship with cooperating teacher and secondary students. Results indicated that each of the three preservice teachers expressed a real interest in the teaching strategies introduced in the content area reading course. Results also indicated profound concerns about the degree to which they could be implemented within the field setting--whether the relationship between cooperating teachers and preservice teacher became a power or collegial one overrode the other factors of strong personal biography, the content of the related reading course, and opportunities for reflection. Findings suggest that student placement in field experiences is often a matter of convenience rather than careful thought; and cooperating teachers taking courses in clinical supervision with its emphasis on field notetaking and conferencing skills is not enough. (One table of data is included; 27 references are attached.) (RS)

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A CASE STUDY OF THREE PRESERVICE TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT CONTENT AREA READING THROUGH THE WINDOW OF STUDENT-PROFESSOR DIALOGUE JOURNALS

Running Head: A Case Study

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A CASE STUDY OF THREE PRESERVICE TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT CONTENT AREA READING THROUGH THE WINDOW OF STUDENT-PROFESSOR DIALOGUE JOURNALS

According to a recent analysis of research in secondary content area reading, studies of secondary reading practices are at an "embryonic" stage with a paucity of fine-grained naturalistic studies to guide our development of future teachers (Alvermann & Moore, 1991). These authors point out that although there is some variation in the degree to which content area teachers use the existing knowledge base about promising vocabulary and comprehension teaching strategies and small group inquiry learning, traditional modes of instruction still predominate. In many content area classrooms in social studies, science, and English, the dominant mode of instruction remains lecture delivery, unguided text reading assignments, and recitation or test-taking on factual information.

Required university content area reading courses for preservice teachers aim to change the status quo in light of the research on effective teaching strategies. Over 31 states require some form of content area reading course for preservice teachers (Bean & Readence, in press). However, the need for routinized instructional practices that maintain order and ease of accountability make changes to this system difficult. Moreover, many content area teachers who work in a supervisory role with preservice field-experience students were educated at a time when content area reading courses were not required. Since field experiences tied to content area reading courses often operate on a Middle Ages apprenticeship model, the preservice teacher may not be in a position to negotiate changes in the status quo (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Yet we know all too little about field experiences from the perspective of the participants (Guyton & McIntyre, 1990). Furthermore, we know little about the extent to which preservice teachers are able to incorporate effective reading strategies they learn in required content area reading courses in their public school field experiences.

Previous research has demonstrated that a number of factors interact to shape a future

teachers' beliefs and practices in content area reading. Among these factors are: (a) the influence of discipline subculture (O'Brien, 1988; Bean & Zulich, 1990); (b) the quality of preservice experience in the classroom (Cherland, 1989; Livingston & Borko, 1989; and, Richardson, 1990); and (c) opportunities for reflection on the preservice experience (Bean & Zulich, 1989; Bean & Zulich, 1990; Grimmett, Erickson, MacKinnon, & Riecken, 1990; Staton, 1990; and, Zulich & Bean, 1991). Each of these factors are filtered through a fourth factor--the student's personal and institutional biography which includes experiences as a student for many years in the classroom (Britzman, 1987; Manna & Misheff, 1987; Goodman, 1988; Bean & Zulich, 1990; Carter, 1990; Zeichner & Gore, 1990). We briefly review each of these factors before discussing the present case study analyses.

Each discipline has a unique technical vocabulary, text structure, and underlying theory base that partially defines the teaching terrain. Students often align themselves with the values of their discipline subculture (O'Brien, 1988). Indeed, O'Brien found that preservice content area teachers were resistant to an education course on content area reading because they were studying in disciplines where textbooks were viewed with disdain. It is important to note that students in O'Brien's study were not participating in a field-based practicum.

In addition, the culture of the school also strongly shapes a preservice teacher's beliefs and practices (Goodlad, 1983). The quality of the preservice experience in the classroom influences how preservice teachers' envision their future roles as teachers. There is some compelling evidence that simply expecting a preservice teacher to imitate and adopt the routines of an experienced mentor may be wildly assumptive. Livingston and Borko (1989) studied four student teachers and their cooperating teachers in mathematics. They found that expert teachers developed a rich schemata that guided lesson cues and allowed for improvisation. In contrast, student teachers developed detailed mental plans and written plans that allowed for little improvisation. These researchers concluded that novices may be unable to adopt the routines of expert teachers in an apprenticeship fashion because it takes years to develop the rich lesson schema of an expert. They recommended that student teachers teach the same lesson twice and not solo teach all day so that extra time might be allotted to reflection on teaching.

Field-based experience in the classroom is only educative with time for reflection (Richardson, 1990; Zulich, Bean, & Herrick, in press). In a three year case study involving

dialogue journals shared with an education professor and five teachers, Miller (1990) argued that teachers need opportunities to step back from the vortex of the classroom and examine their changing views of curriculum. Through her ongoing dialogue with her former students, Miller and her dialogue partners came to view knowledge as socially constructed and subject to change. As one teacher in this study commented: " Our work in the teacher/researcher group has given me the opportunity to step back and question my motives, philosophies, desires, and responsibilities as teacher" (Miller, p. 146). In the preparation of the preservice teacher, Cherland (1989) asserted that cooperating teachers appear to hold the key to workable classroom routines with a desire for preservice teachers to learn these routines in an apprenticeship fashion. For example, Miller (1990) found that the mentor teacher in her dialogue journal group finally came to the realization that a first year teacher she was helping with teaching writing simply needed to find her own way. The mentor teacher commented in her journal: "I saw that it was wrong of me to try to fit her into my preestablished framework. I could only see this as I looked back over the writing that we did and thought about our discussions. I was still leading her too much, still unconsciously encouraging her to do it my way." In a later reflective journal entry this mentor teacher commented on asking her novice colleague what she would do with a new student coming into the class and the new teacher revealed a wealth of ideas. "I let her answer her own question, let her listen to her own voice" (Miller, p. 119). Opportunities for reflection on teaching open the doors to new ways of looking at classrooms which are otherwise lost in the day-to-day routines that characterize the world of students and teachers.

Finally, the fourth factor of a student's personal biography influences the process of becoming a teacher both in terms of past school experiences and life experiences. At Indiana University programs designed for career-change professionals moving into teaching after successful ventures in business, nursing, and law, include autobiographical interviews which have resulted in students achieving higher levels of self-awareness about teaching philosophies and biases (Bennett, 1991). In Bennett's study, some preservice content teachers clearly saw teaching as the transmission of knowledge while others viewed teaching as an interaction with learners that shifted the locus of control from the teacher to students. Furthermore, these autobiographical differences resulted in contrasting approaches to classroom teaching. The knowledge transmitters tended to experience frustration with their field-based classroom

assignments and their inability to change the situation. In contrast, the more interactive preservice teachers created exciting classroom environments that displayed students' work and enhanced their self-confidence. Bennett concluded that reflective journals and peer discussion helped each of these career-change professionals work through the fears and problems associated with becoming a teacher. More importantly, they could examine and transform autobiographical experiences that might limit their views of teaching to knowledge transmission versus interactive, student-oriented teaching.

The purpose of the present study was to consider the beliefs and practices of three preservice content area teachers about the required course and its relationship to their two-day-per-week field experiences in social studies, biology, and English through an analysis of their student-professor dialogue journal entries. A second purpose was to explore their actual use of content area reading strategies through interviews designed to tap students' views of the observation-participation experience and their current use of effective learning from text teaching strategies. This study was part of a larger investigation aimed at charting preservice teachers' stages of development across beginning, middle, and student teaching segments of a program (Zulich, Bean, & Herrick, in press).

Method

Subjects

The Fall, 1989 content area reading course was comprised of 12 female and 2 male students representing the following disciplines: (a) 6 from social studies; (b) 1 from biology; (c) 1 from English; (d) 1 from Hawaiian Studies; (e) 1 from mathematics; and (f) 4 from elementary who were inservice teachers taking the course as an elective in their Professional Certificate program. Represented ethnic groups included Hawaiian, Caucasian, Japanese, Chinese, and Portuguese.

The "bounded system" (Stake, 1988) for this case study investigation consisted of three content area reading students who were selected because they came from predominant academic majors in our secondary education program. Furthermore, the text-bound nature of their disciplines afforded an opportunity to explore the learning from text practices employed in their public school field-based practica.

Pseudonyms were assigned as follows: Carolyn in English, Iwalani in social studies, and Marge in biology. Carolyn was a 39 year old Caucasian student, returning to complete teacher certification after a combined degree in French and English and a career teaching horseback riding. Iwalani was a 38 year old Chinese student raised in the Hawaiian community. She was a political science major who left the hotel industry to fulfill her teaching aspirations. She had five children and volunteered as a docent in a local ocean park educational center. Marge was a 42 year old Caucasian student from Louisiana. During the content area reading/writing course, Marge accepted two challenging part-time teaching positions as a G. E. D. instructor at the local prison and at the alternative learning center for at-risk high school students.

The three students in this case study were assigned to observation-participation field experiences two days per week for two hours each day at a Big Island suburban Intermediate School enrolling over 900 students. Carolyn worked in an English class with grades 7 and 8. Iwalani was in an 8th grade social studies class and Marge was assigned to a 7th grade science class.

Materials and Procedures

The three students averaged eight dialogue journal entries during the semester of content area reading. All of these entries were transcribed for analysis. Using qualitative content analysis and constant comparison analysis (Miles & Huberman, 1984; Merriam, 1988), and following procedures of our previous studies (Bean & Zulich, 1990; Zulich, Bean, & Herrick, in press), we repeatedly read and took notes on the transcribed student journals. Separate and specific pieces of information were recorded on index cards (Lincoln & Guba, 1985), which were then organized topically. Repeated sorting of the index cards provided eight categories of student comments that paralleled our earlier investigation of preservice teacher development (Zulich, Bean, & Herrick, in press): (a) course value; (b) preservice teacher thoughts; (c) professional immersion; (d) individual development; (e) relationship to students; (f) relationship with cooperating teacher; (g) awareness of effective lessons and teaching; and, (h) stress/frustration/anxiety. Continued study of students' comments resulted in collapsing several categories.

At final analysis, three major categories emerged that subsumed the original eight categories: (a) value of content area reading, which included specific references to concepts or

strategies learned in the course and often relating to collaborative efforts with the cooperating teacher or application of the strategies in teaching secondary students; (b) preservice teacher thoughts, which included typical feelings, fears, uncertainties, and anxieties about one's own abilities as well as specific awareness of lesson effectiveness; and, (c) relationship with cooperating teacher and secondary students, which included comments on the apprenticeship role, awareness of their professional partnership, and concerns about individual students.

Because student journal entries commonly addressed several topics, we selected specific mentions and complete thoughts as units of information to be assigned to a grid of the three final categories (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Relevant bits of information were counted only once.

In addition to the student-professor dialogue journal analyses, the second author who did not teach the content area reading course conducted retrospective interviews two years later with the three preservice teachers to provide verification of their beliefs and practices. We were interested in the degree to which students in their culminating semester of student teaching would recall and use content area reading strategies. Was this enduring and useful knowledge? Did other factors influence the degree to which these students would recall and use content area reading strategies two years after their introduction in the course and field experience?

The interviews sought information on the three analysis categories (i.e. value of content area reading; preservice teacher thoughts; and, relationship with the cooperating teacher and secondary students)with a focus on the degree to which specific teaching strategies learned in the course were used in the students' praticum assignments and subsequent field experiences. Questions were developed based on guidelines for qualitative research interviews (Bogdan and Biklin, 1992).

Each student's dialogue journal transcript was available for reference during the interview. The interviews considered the three major categories from a "then" and "now" perspective, and included questions asked in each area that progressed from broad concerns to more focused, detail questions. For example, in the first or "then" section on the value of content area reading, the interviewer asked the student to refer to Fall, 1989 and: "Recall class and o/p experiences." The second question asked more specifically: "How well did Education 331 (content area reading)prepare you for or relate to your observation-participation experiences?" In the "now" section relating to current teaching responsibilities, the interviewer asked: "What

are your feelings about content area reading?" The second question sought to determine "How well did 331 prepare you for your current teaching situation?" The interviewer took field notes as the interviews progressed with a taperecorded version available for later review. The field notes and tape were analyzed by both authors for emerging patterns and themes.

Results

The analysis of dialogue journals involved a consideration of specific comments made about the three major categories distilled in our pattern analysis: (a) the value of content area reading; (b) preservice teacher thoughts; and, (c) the preservice teacher's relationship with the cooperating teacher and students in the field experience. A frequency count of categorical comments revealed individual differences in how each of these students perceived the value of content area reading, engaged in thoughts typical of a preservice teacher, and how they handled their relationship with a cooperating teacher and students.

Table 1 displays the frequency of student comments in each of the three categories. This descriptive data suggests that Iwalani in social studies faced more preservice teacher concerns concerns than did Marge in science and Carolyn in English. Marge's comments were fairly balanced across the three categories and Carolyn had more specific mentions in the value of content area reading category than her peers. These brief interpretive comments are best considered by letting each of the three students tell their stories through selected quotes from their dialogue journals and subsequent interviews.

Insert Table 1 About Here

Iwalani

Iwalani was a political science major who completed her field experience in a junior high social studies classroom. Her journal entries were lengthy and showed a good deal of self-reflection. As the semester progressed and teaching strategies were introduced and demonstrated in the class, Iwalani's comments on course value supported her attempts to apply the various strategies in her observation-participation setting. For example, she commented "After looking over chapter 5 in our text on vocabulary strategies, I opted for the graphic

organizer because it makes sense to present this chapter in a sequential manner."

Iwalani's self-doubts about her ability to successfully present lessons comprised a significant part of her preservice teacher thoughts which she dealt with through discussion in her dialogue journal prior to trying out content area reading strategies in the junior high social studies classroom. Prior to teaching an early lesson in her field experience she wrote:

> We plan to hand out to students a copy of the vocabulary words and a sketch of the graphic organizer. Then present the material on the board so they can follow with their graphic organizer. Does this sound wise? They are unfamiliar with the material.

Following the actual lesson, Iwalani analyzed those aspects that would need refinement in future lessons:

> I just recently had the experience of teaching a lesson and I'm not too pleased. The lesson went quicker than I expected and I was sort of left with my mouth wide open! I should have started a discussion check for understanding etc.

She mentioned having "butterflies" during this lesson but as the semester progressed Iwalani developed greater confidence in her teaching. By the end of the semester she could comfortably plan and carry out a strong content area reading lesson. In this instance, Iwalani team taught a lesson with another observation-participation student. She wrote:

> My partner and I were completely successful in carrying out a comprehension strategy last Thursday. An anticipation-reaction guide on responsibilities and duties of a citizen. We wrote 6 controversial statements. Generated lots of personal feelings about and really provided for a healthy discussion and critical thinking. Even the teacher got excited.

Throughout her journal, Iwalani praised her cooperating teacher for including her as a "partner" in students' learning. Early in the semester Iwalani wrote:

> She (the cooperating teacher) has even set us up with a file box and a manila folder. She has explained several strategies she uses in class. Into active participation and cognitive thinking. Her class

> is set-up in a very interesting, non-conformist way--6 round tables with students grouped--I like that.

This category of relationship to the cooperating teacher and students emerged as an important factor in Iwalani's interview comments. At the time of the interview comments that follow, Iwalani had delayed student teaching in order to have her sixth child. She engaged in part-time ESL instruction with Japanese students at the community college and planned to student teach in Spring, 1992.

In the category of content area reading value, Iwalani's interview comments reveal an initial skepticism common to students from various discipline subcultures:

> When I first took content area reading it was just like a regular course. I didn't quite understand what application there would be in my observation-participation experience. Thus, after taking the course or while I was taking the course, what really helped me bridge the gap was my o/p experience--putting it into practice.

She says, "The graphic organizer, for example, gave me specific ideas for teaching that were student oriented." Iwalani indicated she used this strategy in her ESL teaching assignment at the community college.

Her interview comments supported many of the initial fears she mentioned in her journal within the category of preservice teacher thoughts. Most importantly, she valued her cooperating teacher's willingness to let her try out various strategies and take risks. She felt her relationship with her cooperating teacher progressed from initial fears to admiration for the active learning that occurred in this classroom. "Not busy work--kept you relating to students--not going back to your desk." Thus, the key to Iwalani's placing an enduring value on content area reading strategies seemed to be her positive working relationship with her cooperating teacher that fostered a risk-taking stance.

Iwalani commented that she found value in the strategies with her own children, especially the two older children enrolled in high school. She found graphic organizers to be the most helpful in guiding them to break down complex information in science into manageable units.

Marge

Marge also enjoyed a positive working relationship with her cooperating teacher in junior

high science but her discipline subculture with its reliance on the lecture method made her journey toward other forms of teaching perhaps more difficult than Iwalani's.

Marge started her journal with a similar level of confusion about the purpose of the content area reading course and related anxiety about the impending field experience. She said, "I'm not sure what is expected of me in this o/p class. I am feeling nervous about going into a high school biology class. How can I handle the prejudice aimed at me?" In this same journal entry, Marge indicated further concerns about her relationship with students: "How will they view me?" She also revealed some additional anxiety about being in a multicultural classroom as a mainlander: "Will I stand out like a sore thumb?"

Marge saw the observation-participation experience as a journey into the unknown after many years in college biology classrooms and labs. However, once she met her cooperating teacher, a gifted junior high science instructor, she said, "The students didn't look too dangerous in 7th grade biology."

In her journal she reflected on the disparity between the lecture model provided in science classes and the need to vary instructional procedures modeled in the content area reading course. "I'm taking a biology class that is 95 percent lecture and realize the format you use is much more fluid."

By her final two journal entries, Marge praised the value of the class and mentioned that her final teaching project used a graphic organizer with the topic of respiration. She commented: "four classes of seventh grade biology (gifted/talented and high-average). All went well. The low average group--was that ever an eye opener. Talked to each other etc. Boy was my bubble burst."

Marge valued both the content area reading strategies and her strong working relationship with her cooperating teacher. These factors helped her learn new modes of teaching using small groups and reducing her initial dependence on the lecture method. Her interview comments while in student teaching suggest that although she recalled the strategies, her student teaching experience may not permit the same level of experimentation possible in the observation-participation setting.

As she thought back to her 7th grade science field experience, Marge praised her cooperating teacher for his use of "eyes and body language" in managing junior high classes. She

confirmed the fears that characterized her journal comments in the early part of the course. "I was kind of scared. I had some real fears--especially being haole in Hawaii." But she said her cooperating teacher gave her the confidence to overcome these fears.

Now, in the 10th grade rural high school setting where she student teaches she finds herself more of an apprenticeship rather than collegial role with her cooperating teacher. There is no adopted textbook. Rather, the students listen to a lecture and their notes serve as the text. Marge follows this approach but her interview comments suggested a desire for more variety in teaching strategies harking back to her observation-participation experience. "The cooperating teacher is the whole thing. My cooperating teacher (in content area reading) was totally not threatened by me." When she indicates that some of the strategies are being used in student teaching she does not mention any specifics. She commented that a student teacher has no power. Marge seemed to have a nostalgic view of her content area reading field experience. In her student teaching assignment she adopted a survival stance, enduring the obsequious apprenticeship role that student teaching too often entails.

This theme of who holds the power in a student's field experience and how it is exercised emerged in Carolyn's dialogue journal account and her subsequent interview during student teaching.

Carolyn

Carolyn quickly grasped the intent and array of teaching strategies introduced in the content area reading course. Her journal contains very specific references to using writing roulette, mapping, word concept maps, and other strategies introduced in the course. After teaching a lesson she wrote:

> I had the opportunity to lead the vocabulary review session in one of my o/p classes last week. Although I wasn't able to conduct it entirely as I would have like to (I'm dying to try out the verbal-visual strategy), I was able to use a modification of of the word concept map technique. Some of the students got the idea immediately--others were perplexed at generating examples.

Despite her positive view of the teaching strategies introduced in the course, her

relationship with the cooperating teacher remained tenuous at best. At the time of the course, she accepted the situation and related it to her personal biography as a horseback riding instructor. She wrote, "I found it interesting that Mrs. M. commented that I'm too 'cool' (as in monotonous--unemotional). It was my experience with horses coming to the foreground. Nerves of steel are crucial with horses."

At the time of her interview, Carolyn was engaged in student teaching in high school English and French with two cooperating teachers. Another English teacher became seriously ill and Carolyn was hired to finish out the semester.

Carolyn's reflection during the interview on her content area reading observation-participation experience revealed a desire for more interchange about teaching with her mentor. She wanted the cooperating teacher to make the day-to-day organizational strategies that an experienced teacher uses in a classroom more explicit for a novice. Carolyn hoped to have an open exchange of teaching techniques with her mentor but felt she was not given enough opportunity to try various strategies. "I tried to share vocabulary techniques--she wasn't interested." She viewed the cooperating teacher's class as: "A very controlled classroom--not comfortable for me--not much of a relationship."

In her new role as an independent teacher she said, "I'm now using vocabulary techniques--I know I can do it now. It's my class without disturbing the cooperating teacher." She commented on using writing roulette, anticipation-reaction guides, and other strategies. "My students like the strategies." She said the major idea she gained from content area reading was "Using texts rather than being used by texts."

Discussion

In the present study, each of these students expressed both a real interest in the teaching strategies introduced in a content area reading course and profound concerns about the degree to which they could be implemented within the field setting. Through an analysis of the three students' journal entries and their interview comments, common concerns emerged. In addition, each of these three students filtered their field based experience through unique personal and cultural biographies. Graves (1991, p. 20) argued that "case study work pushes beyond similarities to show the important differences that exist in all persons." Indeed, each the three

preservice teachers in this study approached the process of becoming an independent certified content area teacher with some parallel concerns and clear individual differences. We consider these differences first and then comment on the major area of concern expressed by each of our case study participants and implications for programs aimed at developing reflective, risk-taking content teachers.

Iwalani, Marge, and Carolyn sifted their course and field work experiences through their unique personal perspectives. All three students were older non-traditional students with previous career experiences. Iwalani had an extensive "ohana" or family network that supported her career change from the hotel industry to teaching. She was unhurried and methodical in her approach to becoming a social studies teacher. She readily grasped specific strategies like the graphic organizer and sought ways to apply these strategies in helping her own children, in ESL teaching, and in her other university classes. She attributed her growing confidence in teaching to the strong collegial relationship provided by her cooperating teacher in the observation-participation experience.

Unlike Iwalani, Marge brought many years in agricultural research and science lecture halls to the process of becoming a teacher. These deeply ingrained ways of knowing had to be altered. In essence, Marge had to carefully examine this unidimensional way of imparting information through a lecture in light of alternative strategies presented in the content reading course and in her practicum with a highly skilled junior high science teacher. In addition, she brought with her many fears about the cultural differences and clashes she might experience as a haole from the mainland. As she discovered, her positive working relationship with her cooperating teacher dispelled many of her cultural preconceptions. She used graphic organizers successfully and found they perfectly fit her discipline's tradition of classification and systematic organization.

Unfortunately, when Marge entered her student teaching semester chronicled in her interview two years after the content reading course, she felt she was not allowed the same level of experimentation by the new cooperating teacher. She adopted an apprenticeship rather than collegial stance, enduring the lack of any textbook and the predominance of the lecture method. Marge's experience and that of Carolyn discussed in the section that follows revealed how profoundly a solid foundation for using content reading strategies established early in a program

can be shaken by a classroom or school subculture that relies only on traditional modes of teaching and learning. Marge's comment in the interview that "The cooperating teacher is the whole thing" reveals a power relationship that significantly advances or inhibits a preservice teacher's development.

Carolyn, perhaps related to her field of English and prior experience an an equestrian teacher, displayed tremendous enthusiasm for a wide range of content area reading strategies. However, her working relationship with her observation-participation teacher remained distant and cold. As a result, Marge experimented with many of the strategies in college classes in composition and selectively in her practicum. In thinking back to her practicum in an English classroom, Carolyn longed for a more open exchange of ideas about teaching. She felt stifled by her mentor and expressed a feeling of emancipation in her new role as a teacher taking over for another English teacher who became ill. In essence, Carolyn could now find her own "voice" as a teacher, without the imitative stance of an apprentice trying to figure out the mysteries of teaching by watching the practiced moves of an expert (Miller, 1990).

The present study moves beyond our previous work in case study analysis of preservice content area teachers (Bean & Zulich, 1990). In an earlier study we argued that the competing forces of discipline and school-based cultures, as well as individual development, play uncharted roles in a preservice teacher's effort to function successfully within the profession. The present study of student's dialogue journals and interview comments brings the earlier work into much sharper focus. The crucial factor of how the student's working relationship with the cooperating teacher develops is, in Marge's words, "the whole thing." Whether this relationship becomes a power or collegial one seems to override the other factors of a strong personal biography, the content of the related reading course, and opportunities for reflection.

Two implications can be derived from this case study for programs that strive to educate content area teachers who are likely to use contemporary teaching strategies.

First, student placement in field experiences is often a matter of convenience rather than careful thought about its impact on a student's success or failure. The reflective thoughts and words of these three students show clearly that field placement choices play a powerful role in whether or not a preservice teacher has the freedom to experiment with new modes of teaching content material. When this collegial working relationship is not apparent, a preservice teacher

is likely to retreat to an obsequious role, simply enduring the weeks remaining in the classroom.

Second, although cooperating teachers often take courses in clinical supervision with its emphasis on field notetaking and conferencing skills, we should not assume that this is enough. These three students painted a picture of their ideal working relationship with a mentor in which the cooperating teacher created an atmosphere for the free exchange of ideas. They contrasted this ideal practicum with one that restricted their experimental moves as developing teachers. They argued for more than a technocratic, clinical solution to field based experiences. Each sought a partnership with the more experienced teacher that would allow them to try content area reading strategies, discuss their successes or failures in a nonthreatening fashion, reflect on the experience, and refine lessons for the future. In short, they wanted a more collegial comfort zone in the field experience that may be far too rare.

In future research we plan to use observation along with dialogue and interview analyses to further explore the issue of preservice content area teacher development and the impact of the content reading course on this process. This systematic series of case studies should help guide program modifications in the supervision and preparation of future content teachers.

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TABLE 1

Frequency of Student Journal Comments in Each Category

Category	Iwalani	Marge	Carolyn
Value of Content Area Reading	5	8	15
Preservice Teacher Thoughts	12	4	2
Relationship with Cooperating Teacher and Students	6	6	4